

Victor Valley Community College District

Victor Valley College

Educational Master Plan 1998-2005+

Chapter 1: Introduction To The 1998-2005+ Victor Valley Community College District Educational Master Plan

1. Purpose Of The Plan

Victor Valley Community College District represents an extraordinary resource to the citizens and economy of its High Desert service area. Victor Valley College is the region's only local public higher education institution. From providing a full range of core academics to transfer programs to vocational preparation to addressing the cultural, recreational, athletic, social and economic needs of the region, the District and the college must fulfill a variety of roles and responsibilities. As these requirements are being addressed, the college is continually challenged by changes in technology, instructional innovation, a diverse and changing population and student body, an ever-widening and competitive economic marketplace, and fundamental advances in the collective body of knowledge and academic scholarship.

To meet these responsibilities within such a dynamic operating environment requires vision and planning. Victor Valley College's vision and roadmap into the 21st century unfold in the following pages. This document represents the ideas, views, and perspectives of many faculty, staff, administrators, researchers, analysts, students, residents and others. It is based on an exhaustive schedule of meetings, reviews of thousands of data elements, the refinement of hundreds of potential courses of action, and is rooted soundly in the input and results of the studies and plans before it. Like a mosaic, this educational master plan was conceived through the contributions of many individuals. Combined, these contributions have resulted in a plan that paints a picture of continued creativity, service, excellence, and enterprise.

This document is intended to serve two primary purposes. First, it articulates a strategic direction for the District, a direction that builds upon a strong historical foundation to reach out and respond in enterprising and effective ways to the challenges and needs of the communities we serve. Secondly, it presents a multi-year educational plan intended to guide the District through its evolution into a mature and comprehensive resource for the citizens, communities, and economies of the High Desert.

Community colleges in California shoulder unique and important responsibilities. The District joins with other California community colleges in providing quality higher education to students, lifelong learning opportunities to residents, workforce development and training options for today's and tomorrow's workforce, economic development assistance to local businesses, and a myriad of other services and benefits. The District responds to these responsibilities by providing a wide range of services, curricula, and programming.

At the core of effective programs is planning. Planning is integral to institutional growth. It is an indispensable component of efficient and effective services and their delivery. Planning is vital to the academic enterprise in that it assists faculty, staff, and administrators to better configure the courses, classes, and educational programming that comprise the very essence of the academic mission of the District.

This educational master plan is intended to showcase the planning undertaken in preparation for the balance of this decade and into the new millennium. It is a narrative that reflects on our historical achievements while responding to the factors and trends that will shape our landscape for the coming years. It reflects the goals and ingenuity of faculty, staff, administrators, and the rest of those who comprise the District team. It is, by design, a dynamic document that will serve best if continually reviewed and periodically updated.

2. Time Frames

This educational master plan has divided the presentation of goals and objectives into two time frames. The overall period of time covered by this initial plan document is 1998 - 2005 and beyond. For the purposes of effective and realistic planning, goals/objectives/needs were identified for the "short term" period covering 1998-2000 and for the "long term" period covering 2001-2005. The short term period is intended to fit into the typical three-year budgeting period of the District and most postsecondary institutions. The long term period is, of necessity, more projective in nature but still close enough on the time continuum to enable reliable planning.

3. Genesis Of Its Development

The context and shape of this plan extends from initial District planning efforts initiated in 1992 and that led to the publication of the 1993 college document "The Driving Force: Priorities for the 90s." That narrative envisioned some of the trends and priorities important to the growth of the institution. Also in 1992-93, Victor Valley College completed a comprehensive self study. That effort helped to further the institutional framework of quality assurance improvement, community interaction, and planning. In 1992, the college completed a comprehensive study of the area economy and the vocational and occupational needs of area industry. The institution responded by identifying a range of vocational programs and business community technical assistance services that continue even now to serve the needs of business in the High Desert.

During the 1996-97 academic year, a campus project team began working on critical elements of a Victor Valley College Educational Master Plan. An initial draft of that plan was presented on May 27, 1997. That initial document asked the institution to consider four critical issues: (1) addressing the needs of diverse populations, (2) providing programs to meet unique community needs, (3) using emerging technologies where and as appropriate, and (4) exploring alternative and collaborative teaching techniques. In a related way, the framers of the initial plan challenged the college community to address the following issues: (1) the positive impact of and the challenges flowing from diversity concerns, (2) the impact of changing technology on the college and the delivery of instruction, (3) the changing demographic trends in society, (4) the changing student profile, and (5) the growing attention on workforce needs.

These and other important elements of the initial educational master plan draft have been used to guide and are incorporated within this version of VVC's Educational Master Plan. Much has been contributed by many faculty, staff, students, and administrators over the years. Many issues have been identified and a considerable number of trends and forces have been deliberated. More importantly, this master plan has captured many of the contributions of that earlier work and incorporated the contemporary contributions and thinking of scores and scores of faculty members and administrative personnel. In every way, this current educational master plan is an effective blend of up-to-the-minute contemporary planning coupled with the incorporation of substantial historical, environmental scan, and contextual work from the on-going campus planning process.

4. Chronology and Process

In approximately late July 1997, Victor Valley College secured external counsel (The Resource Group) for technical assistance and related services leading to the production of this multi-year Educational Master Plan for the college. TRG has assisted numerous colleges and universities to produce educational master plans, academic master plans, campus master plans, and the like. Here is a chronology of key events and decision points that facilitated the development of the Victor Valley College Educational Master Plan.

Initial Meetings to Discern Methodologies and Procedures

Beginning in late July 1997 and continuing through October 1997, the project team of TRG, led by Dr. Esteban Soriano, met on at least seven occasions with the core VVC team to identify and resolve basic procedural and EMP scope issues. The campus core team always involved at least President Halisky, VP Salterelli, and

Director of Customer Service Darlene Castleman. On at least two occasions, VP Jim Pell and staff from data operations participated in these sessions.

The purpose of these sessions was to address such structural issues as:

- ⇒ What to call the publication
- ⇒ What time period would be involved
- ⇒ Which divisions or units would be involved
- ⇒ What historical data were available
- ⇒ How to integrate existing elements such as strategic plans, program reviews, earlier drafts of an educational master plan, the Vision statement, campus mission statement, etc.
- ⇒ Identifying a campus calendar to ensure the availability of faculty and staff for assignments and the ability to produce required drafts of plan sections
- ⇒ Determining whether to have the plan based on program clusters, departments, or divisions
- ⇒ Identifying the process of who would be responsible in each program cluster or major to produce initial plan elements, who would be the check point, who would work with faculty to finalize plan elements (e.g., goals, objectives, activities, resource requirements), the role of VP Salterelli, the role of the President, and the role of the consultants
- ⇒ Developing and finalizing a comprehensive outline of each proposed chapter and section so that the outline would guide the identification of which personnel were best capable of drafting which sections in specific chapters

The sessions were also designed to edit and finalize a series of existing forms and formats related to capturing the planning input of faculty, lead faculty, program cluster chairs, staff, and campus administrators. These forms allowed each participant to organize their input in common ways through the use of common forms that were both hard copy and electronic.

The sessions were further designed to finalize what policies would be in place for what training would take place, the amount of time faculty and administrators would be given to prepare their goals and objectives, to whom those initial drafts would be submitted and the process of review and refinement, how the draft material would flow from faculty to the VP and ultimately to the President for final review and approval for inclusion in the master draft EMP to be prepared by the consultant, and then the process of editing and finalizing the draft EMP into an acceptable final, public EMP version.

Each of these tasks was accomplished during the course of the meetings. Seven versions of the draft comprehensive plan outline were created before a final outline was approved by the campus core team. Four versions of the procedures instructions and input forms were edited before a final version was approved.

Creating Baseline and Historical Data

During this same time period, the consultant and internal project team worked with the data unit of the college to identify what campus data were available for analysis and display on such topics as enrollment history, faculty and staff profiles, graduation rates, growth rates, seat time and FTES, and other topics important for documenting trends. Just over 20 comprehensive tables were identified as being possible to construct, and the data unit spent about three weeks preparing drafts of those tables. In addition, a similar number of community-based data displays were prepared by the consultant to describe area population trends, economic activity, workforce projections, and the like.

Creating and Hosting Training Sessions

The decision was made to collect academic planning data by program cluster. There are over 30+ program clusters at VVC. The campus and consultant prepared a listing of each cluster and its "lead" faculty person.

The consultant worked with Ms. Castleman in September and October 1997 to identify four one-hour EMP training sessions for faculty and staff to be conducted during November - December 1997 on various days and times in the VVC Board Room. Faculty could attend any one of the four training sessions most convenient to their schedules. Letters were prepared by Ms. Castleman and sent to each cluster lead faculty member and

virtually all campus faculty announcing the training sessions and asking them to register with Ms. Castleman in a session they preferred to attend.

In all, about 47 faculty, staff, and administrators attended the sessions, representing virtually every program cluster (except perhaps two). In the case of one program cluster where the lead faculty member could not make any of the sessions, the consultant returned to the college for a one-on-one session. At least three lead faculty engaged in follow-up telephone consultations with the consultant to provide further training.

The training sessions were conducted by the consultant. Each attendee was provided a folder containing the comprehensive plan outline, all forms and formats to be used to capture their input, a detailed instruction sheet on the process and deadlines, a sample set of input forms that featured a sample goal, objective, activities, and resource requirements, and a flow chart of how the process would move along from this period forward until a final EMP was prepared. A sheet also included contact information to receive additional information or assistance from the consultant.

The consultant provided overheads for all sheets, answered all questions, distributed extra copies of printed input forms and then passed out to each attendee electronic fill-in form diskettes that corresponded to the type of computer and software program the attendee used.

Ms. Castleman was provided with ten additional training material sets and diskettes that were available to any non-attendee or an attendee who had misplaced his/her set.

Generating the "Pre-Distribution" Draft Version

Faculty members were given from the period of November 1997 to nearly the end of January 1998 (10 weeks) to prepare the goals/objectives/strategies/resource needs forms for their clusters. They were to turn them into VP Salterelli who would review them and work with lead faculty should revisions be needed.

Given the crush of campus events and other pressures, the President extended the input time from faculty to early March 1998.

After meeting with VP Salterelli and making any revisions necessary, lead faculty members submitted both hard and electronic cluster plans to Ms. Castleman. She tracked which program clusters had submitted their plans and which were still outstanding. Beginning in the second week of March 1998, the consultant began receiving the program cluster plans. Where electronic diskettes were missing, the consultant scanned or re-entered the hard copies. All of the submissions were then strung together according to which chapter they would be featured in and the alpha order in which they would appear. The consultant worked with Ms. Castleman through the second week of May to receive the input forms from the remaining, last lead faculty members.

During this same time period of November 1997 through early May 1998, the other sections and chapter elements were being drafted by the consultant and specifically assigned to VVC staff, including the President, VP Salterelli, VP Pell, Ms. Castleman, the PIO, and others.

All of the above material was strung together in a "pre-distribution" draft that made no attempt to edit any of the materials. Copies of this version were prepared for the core campus team and two meetings were held in late April and May 1998 at VVC to go through this version for any obvious errors, holes, major corrections, and the like. This version was then edited by the consultant group for obvious grammatical errors and layout errors.

Generating the "Internal Edit" Draft Version and Plans for the Final Version

The result of these efforts was the production of an "internal edit" version. This version was finalized and presented to the campus during the last week of May 1998. Five bound copies and a camera ready copy of this version was prepared for the campus and delivered to the President. The consultant had a set of final meetings with the President and core campus team in May and early June 1998 to review the purpose and next steps in the review, editing, and finalization of the plan.

It was determined by the core campus team and the President that the edit version would be widely disseminated to deans, VPs, key lead faculty and others so that the version could be modified in any way to

properly capture the most current plans and goals of each cluster and division. With the introduction of several new deans and senior administrators, this process allowed their input and revisions to earlier drafts and submissions.

The President had sections of the plan copied and distributed to his senior administrative team at a retreat during the summer of 1998. More sections were copied and distributed to deans, unit heads, senior administrators, and lead faculty as they returned to school in September 1998. Their charge was to review their sections, update any goals, objectives or plans and ensure that the proposed activities were consistent with the overall institutional goals and objectives for the next 5-7 years.

This campus review process generated numerous edit marks, changes, and section rewrites. Those items were forwarded to the consultant beginning mid November 1998 through mid January 1999. A “working final” draft was prepared about January 20, 1999 and underwent final review, comment, and presentation to Trustees, faculty, administrators, staff, and others. Those comments were captured and incorporated into this final approved version of the Plan.

5. Participants In The Process

Charting the future of the District requires the involvement of many constituencies in order to: (1) generate a comprehensive and realistic view of future needs, (2) assure accuracy, and (3) promote a true sense of ownership in the resulting goals and recommendations. This educational master plan has benefited from the extensive involvement and contributions of a broad cross section of District and community representation. Coupled with the earlier campus planning work, this plan has sought the input of:

- District trustees, faculty, staff, administrators, and students
- Area businesses and related databases
- VVC Foundation board members and other college advisors

Leadership has been provided by the Trustees, president, vice presidents, deans, department chairs, program cluster representatives, and the Academic Senate.

Individual faculty and those representing the various program clusters on each campus have played a particularly important role in the production of this plan. The hundreds of goals, objectives, proposed activities, and identified resource requirements featured herein *came directly* from the scores and scores of faculty and staff who daily serve the thousands of students and community members who have come to rely on the District as a vital resource in their lives.

6. Linkage To Other District Planning Initiatives

The contemporary history of the District is rooted in planning and documentation. This educational master plan has been able to borrow from a number of essential existing narratives, including the District’s mission and goal statements, facilities plan, technology plan, accreditation self-study, economic development study, and the output of the District’s academic program review process. It was considered essential to develop an educational master plan that was founded on the lessons learned and policies developed from these related efforts.

7. Intended Use Of The Plan And Its Role In Future Program Development And Delivery

This educational master plan has gathered in one place much of the relevant information needed for the future and further development of District academic and student support programs, including environmental factors affecting the District, demographic data, economic and sociometric trends, current programs, overall missions and goals, the distinctive plans and needs of each program cluster, resource requirements, and the prospects of new programs, services, and initiatives.

As such, portions of this narrative can be used as the basis for program reviews, comparative studies, narrative for accreditation reports, prioritizing and spacing of requests for equipment or staff or facilities, planning professional staff development activities, and supporting program change proposals. Data presented herein can be used to facilitate campus design specifications, support funding requests, reinforce resource development and fundraising campaigns, and a host of other campus initiatives and needs.

8. Keeping The Plan Dynamic: The Use Of Program Reviews For Continual Updating

This plan is not intended to be a static, stand-alone volume that serves as the “ultimate” arbiter for the future of the District. Rather, it has been constructed with the understanding that every such plan must be updated on an on-going basis in order to reflect contemporary changes. Indeed, future changes in enrollment, the economy, finances, community needs, statewide and regional initiatives, legislative mandates, technology, and the like, will demand refinement of the plan.

It is precisely the recognition that change is inevitable that the plan has been written with both short term and long term goals and activities. Even if change does not dramatically alter the long term goals described herein, the plan has been designed as an ever moving “window.” Each year to two years, the forms and formats used to create this plan version should be used to extend and amend the plan by another year or two. In this way, the plan becomes a dynamic resource for the District.

9. Format Of The Sections That Follow

This educational master plan is divided into nine chapters. This first chapter has introduced the plan, its purpose, genesis, and intended use.

- Chapter 2 profiles the District and presents important historical and trend data.
- Chapter 3 reviews the mission, vision, and strategic objectives of the District.
- Chapter 4 features the results of the environmental scan and the assumptions guiding this plan.
- Chapter 5 describes the educational goals and objectives of the college and its programs.
- Chapter 6 summarizes the overall personnel requirements of plan programs and activities.
- Chapter 7 summarizes the overall facilities requirements of plan programs and activities.
- Chapter 8 summarizes the overall technology requirements of plan programs and activities.
- Chapter 9 presents the services and goals of student services at Victor Valley College.

Combined, these chapters present a comprehensive volume and form an educational master plan featuring the most realistic, creative, and dynamic contributions of the family of faculty, staff, students, and administrators that is the Victor Valley Community College District.